

Name \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Attorney General

By Meg Leonard

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The Office of the Attorney General was created in 1789. At first, it was a one-person part-time job. The lawyer chosen for this job was supposed to know the law well. He served as the head lawyer for the United States. He prosecuted cases for the country. He advised the president on legal matters. The job soon proved to be too much for one person to handle. Other lawyers were paid to take cases for the United States.



After the Civil War, there were many legal cases. A lot of money was being paid to the lawyers who took care of these cases. Congress passed the Act to Establish the Department of Justice in 1870. It made the attorney general the head of this new department. The attorney general is also the chief law enforcement officer of the federal government. The new department was established to handle all the legal business of the United States.

Today, the Department of Justice keeps growing. It is the world's largest law office. The attorney general has control over all criminal prosecutions. He or she controls all civil suits in which the United States has an interest, as well as federal law enforcement. The department has forty component organizations. Among these are the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI, the U.S. Marshals, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

The Department of Justice is part of our country's executive branch. The attorney general is chosen by the president. The Senate has to agree with the president's decision. If this happens, then the person can take office. The attorney general advises the president on legal matters. Sometimes, he or she appears in front of the Supreme Court. The mission of this department is to uphold the law, ensure public safety, prevent and control crime, and provide fair and just punishment to those guilty of a crime.

Attorney General

## Questions

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What branch of government includes the Department of Justice?
- A. legislative
  - B. executive
  - C. judicial
  - D. none of the above
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Who is the head of the Department of Justice?
- A. Attorney General
  - B. Secretary of Justice
  - C. Justice General
  - D. Supreme Court
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Which war called for a change in the Office of the Attorney General?
- A. World War I
  - B. Revolutionary War
  - C. War of 1812
  - D. Civil War

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\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Which of the following is NOT a true statement about the Department of Justice?

- A. It is still growing today.
- B. It was established in 1789.
- C. It is the world's largest law office.
- D. It includes the FBI and U.S. Marshals.

5. How has the job of the attorney general stayed the same over the years?

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**What does it mean to treat others fairly or justly? Write a story that shows two different people being treated fairly or justly.**

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**Write a story about someone who finds he or she has too much work to do. How does he or she solve this problem?**

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